

Midcoast Senior College

Spring terms I and II, 2026

The Romantic Era: Literature, the Arts, Revolution

The movement known as Romanticism swept Europe and America in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. It brought revolutionary ideas in politics, literature, art, and music, as well as in the nature of the human imagination. This course presents a series of classes and lectures by several instructors on many of the defining artistic works of that era in their social and philosophical contexts. The influence of Romanticism still leaves its mark on the literature and art of the present day. Included in this course are classes on English Romantic poetry, American Transcendentalism, orchestral music, painting, Victor Hugo's "ideology of disorder," the fiction of Jane Austen, and the Shelley-Byron circle in Geneva from which *Frankenstein* was born. Instructors are Morton Achter, John Haile, Michele Lettiere, David Spurr, Laurie Spurr, and William VanderWolk. The course will span the last four weeks of Spring term I and the first four weeks of Spring term II. Tuition fees will be charged for one term only.

Romanticism I (Spring I):

March 6	The Romantic Era: an Introduction	David Spurr
March 13.	English Romantic poetry	Michele Lettiere
March 20.	American Transcendentalism	John Haile
March 27.	Victor Hugo's Ideology of Disorder	William VanderWolk

Romanticism II (Spring II):

April 10.	Romantic painting from Friedrich to Turner	David Spurr
April 17.	Romantic orchestral music	Morton Achter
April 24.	The fiction of Jane Austen	Laurie Spurr
May 1.	Geneva, summer 1816	David Spurr

Instructors:

Morton Achter is Professor Emeritus of Music at Otterbein University, Ohio.

John Haile has taught English at Avon Old Farms School in Connecticut, Western Reserve Academy in Ohio, and Brooks School in Massachusetts.

Michele Lettiere is a former English teacher at St Paul's School in Concord, NH, and at the Waynflete School, Portland.

David Spurr is Professor Emeritus of English and Comparative Literature at the University of Geneva, Switzerland

Laurie Spurr is former Head of English at the Collège du Léman, Switzerland.

William VanderWolk is Professor Emeritus of French at Bowdoin College.